DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 336 507 CE 058 771

TITLE Strategies: Office Procedures with Communications Math.
INSTITUTION Wyoming Univ., Laramie. Coll. of Education.
SPONS AGENCY Wyoming State Dept. of Education, Cheyenne.
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 45p.; For a related document, see ED 333 099.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Teaching Guides (For Teacher) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Classroom Techniques; *Communication Skills; Integrated Curriculum; *Learning Activities; Lesson Plans; *Mathematics Skills; *Office Occupations Education; Secondary Education; *Special Needs Students; *Teaching Methods

ABSTRACT

This booklet contains 30 one-page strategies for teaching mathematical skills needed for office procedures. All the strategies are suitable for or can be adapted for special needs students. Each strategy is a classroom activity and is matched with the skill that it develops and its technology/content area (communications and/or mathematics). Some activities include selling cupcake, making a collage of pictures of appropriate office attire, proofreading a newspaper, transcribing paragraphs, organizing a fund raiser, role playing teaching a business class, brainstorming for ideas on allocation of resources, and analyzing advertising. (KC)

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On our Cover

Certainly one major goal of educational institutions is to provide a skilled workforce. In modern society, however, the pace of technological improvements can make it difficult to ascertain exactly what skills will be most needed in the future. T.H.E. JOURNAL, March, 1991.

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Strategies

Office Procedures

with

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Communications

Math

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Appreciation is extended to Business Education Consultants in the following states:

Colorado	Michigan	South Carolina
Connecticut	Mississippi	Utah
Illinois	Montana	Vermont
Iowa	Nebraska	Virginia
Kentucky	New York	Washington
Louisiana	Ohio	West Virginia
Massachusetts	Oregon	Wyoming

The curriculum materials that were shared contributed greatly to the development of strategies in this manual. In addition, the materials contributed ideas for planned curriculum change by the paricipants.

Appreciation is extended to Gina Feezer and Mona Bloom for preparing the manual.

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INTRODUCTION

Educators are urged to take a long hard look at present curriculum, the rapidly changing job market, sociological changes, and especially technological changes in the workplace. It is imperative that changes are made in the curriculum to incorporate concepts that focus on these changes and, in addition, focus on what modifications can be made to accommodate those populations considered to be non-traditional.

This manual is a product developed by participants in a curriculum development workshop conducted by Church and Kercher and made possible through a Federal Perkins Vocational Education Grant from the Wyoming Department of Education. June, 1991.

All strategies developed can accommodate or may be modified to accommodate special populations.

Project consultants leading the group in curriculum development in office procedures/ business application with emphasis in mathematics, science, and communications with planning and process for at-risk groups were:

Tommie Butler, State Supervisor of Business Education, Arkansas
Cheryl Heinzerling and Jeanne Mayer, Fred Thomas Career Education Center, Denver
Jan Felton, Central High School, Cheyenne
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Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Take cupcakes and pretend they are scaled down cakes. Have students decide how they are going to decorate and frost. Then decide how much they are going to sell them for to make a certain amount of profit.	Decision making, brainstorming, teamwork, creativity, and problem solving.	Communications Math

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Place office items on desk (i.e. stapler, ribbon, paper clips, paper, pens, calendar, etc.) Give students 15 seconds to look at all items. Cover back up and have students write down as many of the items they possibly can.	Working with written communications and memory.	Communications

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Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Bring magazines and have students make a collage of attire they feel is appropriate for the office.	Works with creativity and teamwork. Makes student conceptualize professional attire.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have students look at newspapers. They are to look for typographical errors.	Show students professionalism. How it makes a company or business look. Works with proofreading.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have students write from a typed paragraph for 30 seconds as fast as they can. They are to get as much down as possible. Then pass off to another sutdent to transcribe.	Works with penmanship and written communications. Students will understand why penmanship is so important and what could possibly happen if transcribed the wrong way.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Teacher will give out several instructions at one time and students are to remember all or as many as they can and do them.	Listening skills are the major emphasis here. Organization and oral communications are also stressed.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Give students an amount of spending money for new clothing. Have students then use mail order magazines to determine which outfits to buy and how many they can purchase. Outfits should be appropriate office dress.	Works the decision making skills, allows for individual creativity, and math skills are used.	Math

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Bring in music magazines. Break class up into groups of three or four. Have students pretend they are the office managers and select the office music.	Uses brainstorming, decision making, teamwork and communications.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have students determine what type of fund raiser they are going to do and how they are going to organize it in order to attend a conference. Those members who do not participate in the fund raising do not get to attend the conference, so it must include all members.	Problem solving, brainstorming, creativity, math and communications.	Communications Math

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have students design an ad for the business they want to work for.	Creativity and communications.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Give the students some various topics to be researched. Examples could be: Why does a slice of cheese fit perfectly on to a saltine cracker when it is folded? The student could write the cracker company or the cheese company. How did peanut butter get to be associated with jelly? There are many directions you could take.	Creativity, research.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Put the students into a teaching position. Tell them to develop a list of business classes that they would teach to a group of high school students. Have them give a rationale for each one, telling why they chose it, and why they think it's important.	Creativity, research.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have the students read a rough draft of a report. Then have them look for errors. There could be mistakes in either spelling or grammar.	Editing, proofreading, research	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have the students apply for a position which they think they may want. You and another teacher can then conduct an interview for that student. Afterward, you and the student can talk about competencies needed for the position.	Interviewing, self presentation.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have the students choose a figure in the business world they most admire. Have them write a report about that figure and make a class presentation.	Research, writing, oral presentation, discussion.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have the students choose a figure in their community who is associated with business. The students then have to meet with the figures personally, and conduct an interview with them. The students then must prepare an oral presentation about their figure.	Oral presentation, communication, writing skills, research.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Give students a subject. Then tell them that they have one minute to think about their subject before they have to tell the rest of the class about it. It makes no difference if they know anything about it or not.	Oral skills, brainstorming.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Give the students a budget of $500 each. The students are required to buy as many clothes as they can with the money allowed. They can compare prices at different stores, or come up with other creative ways to get them.	Budgeting, creativity, compare/contrast, research.	Math

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Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
The students are divided into groups of four. They are then given a business. Their task is to come up with an advertising campaign for the business. The class will serve as the board of directors. Each group will have to present their proposal to them.	Creativity, oral presentation, advertising skills, teamwork, discussion.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
The students will be divided into groups of four. Their purpose is to create a product. They will have to determine its use, target audience, and promotional campaign. They will present their product to the class, and the class will decide its fate.	Teamwork, creativity, marketing skills, discussion, oral presentation.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Take an issue that is "stewing" in the school at the time that you begin the study of management strategies. For example, how to allocate limited parking spaces to students with cars, how to decide which students can enroll in a class with limited space, or how to change the current grading policy. Use some brainstorming to create alternatives.	Communications skills, teamwork, discussion, listening.	Communications Math

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Bring a limited number of candy bars, doughnuts, or other type of food of interest to students. Make sure that there are fewer items than the number of students in class. Ask how many would like to have one of the items. Indicate there aren't enough for each of them. We have a problem. How do we allocate the limited number of items? Students should brainstorm	Teamwork, communications, discussion, listening.	Communciations Math

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continuted) different ways to determine who should get the items. Write suggestions on the board. Evaluate each alternative. Students should vote on which one is the most acceptable and then distribute the items accordingly. Explain that similar situations exist in businesses. They must decide how they will allocate resources.		

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Run a simulation that shows how teamwork through mass production techiniques can indeed increase productivity. The simulation involves preparing a pamphlet. Scrap sheets of 8.5" x 11" paper, a stapler, and pen will be needed. (You may use actual material from other teachers or from the office.) Round 1: Set out six stacks of	Problem-sovling, discussion, reative thinking, teamwork, communication, cooperation, speaking, listening.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continued) paper. Tell students this is a brochure to be put together and stapled for mailing purposes. Select one student to do this activity while the others watch. Instruct the student to collate one sheet from each of the six stacks, then number the pages from one to six at the bottom of the page, then fold the entire brochure in the middle, and		

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continued) staple it closed as though it will be mailed without an envelope. Give the student one minute to do the activity. After the minute, have the other students check the quality of the work. Register how many brochures were correctly assembled. Round 2: Have two students do the same activitiy, letting them decide how they		

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continued) will split the duties. Divide the number by 2 to get the production per worker. Round 3: Add one more student and follow the same procedure. You may vary the activity by adding more staplers etc. Competition may be used by having students compete in each round.		

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continued) Discuss how an automatic stapler or machine collator might help or hinder the results. Discuss what effect specialization of labor, mass production, and automation have on production of goods and services and the types of jobs which can result.		

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have students bring advertisements to class that attempt to change the goals and priorities of people. Have students analyze ads as to the types of appeals used in the ads and the primary objective of the ads. Discuss how the various ads try to change the consumer's expenditure of time, money, and energy.	Reading, research, comparison/contrast.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Select an article from a recent issue of Consumer Reports. Prepare a study guide to go along with the article. Include vocabulary, definitions, and questions relating to all parts of the article.	Reading, vocabulary, research, discussion.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have each student select one career of interest to him or her. Have them develop a written research report using resource materials such as books, brochures, interviews with workers in the occupation. These guidelines should be followed: a. History b. Education requirements c. Tasks and responsibilities	Research skills, writing skills, vocabulary, interviewing, composing, editing/ proofreading, oral presentation.	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continuted) d. Required skills e. Personal and physical characteristics f. Required work experience g. Working conditions h. Range of income i. Opportunities for advancement j. Job outlook k. Required licensing or certification l. Advantages and disadvantages		

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have students brainstorm a list of personal or family expenses. Record all expenses. Classify them into fixed or flexible categories. Then have the students prepare an actual budget, assuming they have just graduated from college and are earning a certain amount of money each month. Assume they must find an apartment and are going to	Comparison/constrast, cost analysis, decision-making, discussion, budgeting, balancing, planning/ forecasting.	Math

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continued) obtain a new car loan. They must be sure to include rent, auto loan, power, gas, phone, TV, entertainment, medical, insurance, groceries, gifts, misc., and any others they might have. Discuss how important it is to plan a budget so that expenses do not exceed income.		

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Have students phone, write, or visit various financial institutions to determine the types of checking accounts available, including the name of the checking account, costs, interest, etc. They should report what they found to the class. In groups, have students prepare graphs or charts detailing their findings. This	Interviewing, composing, research, comparison/contrast, cost analysis, teamwork, communication, decision making.	Communications Math

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continued) may also be done by comparing the different types of loans that banks, savings and loans, and credit unions offer.		

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Set up a role-playing situation in which the students complain to a business about a product or service. Have the students in the audience evaluate how well they did. Evaluated on points such as: 1. Was the complaint clear and concise, 2. Was it assertive, but not overly emotional, 3. Was the proper paperwork available for filing the complaint, etc.	Speaking, listening, communication, evaluation, creative thinking, discussion, nonverbal communication,	Communications

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
Obtain time cards from your school or copies from a local business. Have students figure regular time and overtime wages for a worker who works for your company. Have students find the regular time pay by multiplying the regular time hourly rate by the number of regular time hours worked. Next, have students find the overtime pay by	Mathematics, reading, writing.	Communications Math

Strategy	Skill Development	Technology/Content Area
(continued) multiplying the overtime hourly rate by the number of overtime hours worked. Last, have students add the regular time pay and the overtime pay. You may wish to have students figure deductions such as insurance, social security and federal income taxes, and, in addition, giving net pay figures instead of gross pay figures.		